

REMARKS

In the March 6, 2003 Office Action, claims 1-14 were withdrawn from consideration. All of the remaining claims 15-20 stand rejected in view of prior art. No other objections or rejections were made in the Office Action.

Status of Claims and Amendments

None of the claims are being amended by the current Amendment. Thus, claims 15-20 are pending, with claim 15 being the only independent claim. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested in view of above amendments and the following comments.

Election of Species

On page 2 of the Office Action, Applicant's election without traverse in paper number 8 was acknowledged. Thus, non-elected claims 1-14 were withdrawn from further consideration. However, Applicant respectfully requests that non-elected claims 1-14 be rejoined in this application upon allowance of a generic or linking claim.

Specification

Applicant has found several typographical errors upon review of the specification. Accordingly, Applicant has amended the specification to correct the typographical errors.

Applicant believes that the specification is now correct and complies with 37 CFR §1.71 and 37 CFR §1.75(d)(1).

Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

On pages 2-4 of the Office Action, claims 15, 17-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Patent Application Publication 2001-17040 to Kazuya Nanbu ("Nanbu patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,368,225 to Manabe ("Manabe patent"). Claims 15-16 stand rejected over the Nanbu patent in view of Japanese Patent Application Publication 11-206284 to Mamoru Koike ("Koike patent"). Applicant believes that the Nanbu patent, the Manabe patent, and the Koike patent do not disclose or suggest the arrangement of claim 15 as filed.

Regarding the Nanbu patent, it discloses a fishing reel having a metal membrane 32 formed by metal plating on the surface of the finger protector 30. The Office Action acknowledges that the Nanbu patent fails to show a ground film-layer formed by a paint coat and a metal film layer providing a mirror effect and being formed semitransparently.

Regarding the Manabe patent, Applicant believes that the Manabe patent teaches away from the semitransparent metal film layer, which is required by claim 15 as filed. More specifically, in column 6, lines 10-14, the Manabe patent states that the thickness of the metal film should be limited to greater than 150Å, because otherwise "the coverage of the metal film is insufficient so that the substrate can be seen through the metal film." In other words, the Manabe patent clearly teaches away from a structure such as a semitransparent metal film layer, in which the ground layer can be seen through.

On the other hand, claim 15 as filed clearly requires that the metal film means be formed semitransparently to provide a mirroring effect. As explained on page 2, line 31-page 3, line 14, the metal film of the present invention is required to have semi transparency such that the ground layer can be visually recognized. In other words, the metal film means has to be thin enough such that the colors of the ground layer show. *See* page 6, lines 10-30 and page 7, lines 22-27. In this manner, the mirroring effect can be obtained, by which patterns of the ground film layer show while the metallic mirrored surface also shows with the hue of the ground film layer. *See* page 3, lines 8-13.

Applicant believes that, since the Manabe patent discourages forming the metal film layer too thin so as not to show the substrate, the Manabe patent does not disclose or suggest the semi-transparency of the metal film means required by claim 15. Therefore, Applicant believes that the Manabe patent cannot cure the deficiency of the Nanbu patent.

The Koike patent discloses a fishing reel having a metallic layer 14 that is formed by a metal plating process. The Office Action acknowledges that the Koike patent fails to show a ground film-layer formed by a paint coat and a metal film layer providing a mirror effect and being formed semitransparently. Thus, the Koike patent cannot cure the deficiency of the Nanbu patent, either singularly or in combination with the Manabe patent.

Therefore, Applicant believes that the Nanbu patent, the Manabe patent, and the Koike patent fail to anticipate or render obvious the arrangement of claim 15 as filed. Accordingly, Applicant believes that claim 15 is allowable over the prior art of record.


Regarding claims 16-20, they depend from claim 15, and are therefore narrower. Since claim 15 is believed to be allowable as discussed above, Applicant believes that claims 16-20 are also allowable over prior art of record.

In view of the above comments, Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

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In view of the foregoing amendment and comments, Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 15-20 are now in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: Jun/4/03

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